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Anti-Sandinista Drops Arms

Rebel Leader Says He Will Turn to Politics

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MANAGUA, Nicaragua, Dec. 25—Anti-Sandinista rebel leader Alfonso Robelo said today that he will abandon the armed fight against the leftist Nicaraguan government to dedicate himself exclusively to politics.

Robelo, a former member of the Sandinista junta, said that although he was leaving the Costa Rican-based Democratic Revolutionary Alliance "for 1985," he did not condemn others who chose to militarily oppose the Nicaraguan government.

He said the leaders of the alliance, known as ARDE, should take the most convenient road, whether "civic or bellicose," to oust the Sandinistas.

Robelo's remarks were broadcast by the Costa Rican radio station Radio Impacto and monitored in Managua. The Nicaraguan government repeatedly has accused the station of being a CIA front.

"My activities have always been in the political field," said Robelo, who directed the political arm of the alliance but earlier this year entered into a feud with its military leader, Eden Pastora.

"I think that I can achieve more toward the liberation of Nicaragua specifically with political elements," Robelo said. Robelo, 44, did not say whether the "political elements" to which he planned to dedicate himself would be in Nicaragua or another country.

Robelo survived an assassination attempt nearly two months ago in the Costa Rican capital when an assailant threw a bomb into his car. A woman who was seated in the front seat with him was seriously wounded in the attack.

Robelo founded the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement in 1978 to oppose dictator Anastasio Somoza. With the triumph of the leftists in 1979, he became a member of the Sandinista junta but left the government in 1980, accusing the junta of leading the country to communism.